

Wheels and Heels - December 2002

Email news from MoDOT Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator Caryn Giarratano

Greetings Windbenders!

There have been many days in the last two months during which I have been so busy, I lacked the time to keep track of what I did. And all the projects I have been assigned need my attention **right now!**

Policy changes continue to take time. The grate policy rewrite to allow only bike-safe curved-vane grates on roadways and shoulders has finally been approved by the Engineering Policy Subcommittee and is in line to be sent to the Engineering Policy Committee. I have been working with many MoDOT people and Dr. Gary Spring, engineering professor at Rolla, to review the MoDOT rumble strip policy. Dr. Spring has submitted a draft of his research accumulated from different states on rumble strips. When his research paper is completed, I can use it to recommend any necessary changes to MoDOT's policy.

A new committee I call "District Contacts" has been formed to assist in the identification of bicycle corridors that cross the state. Each of the ten district people is working with a team of bicyclists in their area to assist him or her with this project. In addition, there is a team of three bicyclists from Kansas City who has volunteered its time for this project. We are looking at using a Bicycle Compatibility Index (BCI) to assist us in this effort.

Pedestrian issues are beginning to take center stage. We pulled all the pedestrian statutes together and have sent them to be formatted, printed and laminated (like we did with the bicycle statutes). I have been meeting with a small group of MoDOT folks to discuss bridge drain standards as we strive to continually improve pedestrian safety. Eventually we plan to identify/create a pedestrian safety packet. There is very little MoDOT policy written regarding pedestrians, and I plan to change that asap!

The creation of a communications network has made wonderful progress. In the last two months, I have spoken at meetings with the Missouri Bicycle Federation, the St. Joseph Bicycle Club, MoDOT District 6, St. Louis East-West Gateway BPAC, Kansas City Mid-America Regional Council BPAC, MoDOT BPAC, St. Joseph Transportation Advisory Committee and the Jefferson City Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force. In addition, I have met with the Governor's Council on Health and Physical Fitness, Department of Health's Safe Routes to School, St. Louis Trailnet, St. Louis Critical Mass, Mississippi River Trail Committee and the Department of Health State Physical Activity Plan Committee.

We are hard at work to help with the reauthorization of TEA-21. MoDOT is working with Missouri's congressional delegation, especially Senator Bond, in the reauthorization process that will occur in 2004. Senator Bond is the chairman of the Senate subcommittee that will write this bill.

The MoDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) is being restructured to increase its efficiency and productivity. This group was originally created by the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission in the late 1990s to advise state agencies, local governments and other interested parties on a broad range of pedestrian and bicycle-related issues. Representatives from state government, local government and bicycle and pedestrian advocates sit on this committee. The main focus for the group is to recommend policy creation or change to remove barriers for bicycle and pedestrian transportation. Soon this group will be asked to contribute its thoughts regarding the Long Range Plan for bicyclists and pedestrians.

Spotlight on District 1: (Andrew, Atchison, Buchanan, Caldwell, Clinton, Daviess, Dekalb, Gentry, Harrison, Holt, Nodaway and Worth) MoDOT District 1 recently finished construction of our first major project incorporating sidewalks. In addition to the roadway widening/resurfacing, we built sidewalks on Route 6 (Frederick Blvd.) from east of I-29 to Route AC (Riverside Road) in St. Joseph. We also finished

construction of the Faraon Street Bridge replacement over I-29. The new bridge is wider and has both a sidewalk and a bike trail, which matches the City of St. Joseph's Faraon Street improvement from Route 169 (Belt Highway) to Route AC (Riverside Road). These improvements will accommodate pedestrian transportation to Heartland Hospital at Faraon and to Missouri Western College on the south side of Faraon.

The city of St. Joseph in Buchanan County has completed seven phases of their bicycle and pedestrian trail located mainly along the city's parkway system. The majority of the trail runs north and south, from Krug Park to Southwest Parkway and 22nd Street, as well as from Southwest Parkway and Mansfield Road to Hyde Park. The most recently constructed sections are along an east/west corridor, south of the Municipal Golf Course. Future phases currently being designed will extend the east/west leg to Riverside Road. The City has also completed design plans for a bicycle and pedestrian trail along the Missouri River, from near the St. Jo Frontier Casino to Riverfront Park.

Please forward this newsletter to anyone you feel may be interested. If you are not on the mailing list and would like to be added, please email me your address information.

Tailwinds, Caryn

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